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On the second position of clitic verbs in the Old Saxon *Heliand**

Yasuko Suzuki

1. Introduction

In the Old Saxon *Heliand*, there are several examples where an unaccented finite verb occurs after the clause-initial word and appears to disrupt a noun phrase. For example, in (1) the verb *uuas* occurs between the two words that form the subject phrase *ên iro*.

- (1) *Ên uuas iro* *thuonoh than firiho barnun biforan*
one was of-them then still then of-men sons before
'One of them was still before the sons of men...'

According to Kuhn (1933: 74-77), this finite verb is a second position clitic that is inserted into the clause-initial phrase as observed in other Indo-European languages such as Greek and Sanskrit.

Contrary to Kuhn's claim, this paper shows that the apparent discontinuous elements as given in (1) are due to interaction of factors such as 'free' word order, focus movement, and cliticization of finite verbs and pronouns in a specific order. Although a number of clitic verbs occur after the clause-initial one-word constituent, there is no unambiguous case in the *Heliand* where finite verb cliticization creates a discontinuous element.

It has been claimed that the second position of clitic verbs set the stage for later development of verb-second in various Germanic languages (cf. Wackernagel 1892: 427, Kuhn 1933: 66-68, Hock 1982, 1985, 1991a: 330-333, 1991b).¹ Based on the examination of the language of the *Heliand*, the present paper argues that the 'second position' started as the position after the clause-initial one-word constituent.

2. Defining the second position of sentential clitics

As has been widely reported in the literature, sentential clitics typically occur in the second position and this position allows for two possible options, i.e. after the first word or after the first constituent (cf. Zwicky 1977: 18-20, Klavans 1982: 11-15, Kaisse 1985: 81, Anderson 1993: 72-73, Halpern 1995: 14-15 among others). Languages vary as to which of these two positions is chosen. For example, in Serbo-Croatian sentential clitics allow both positions. In (2) the auxiliary clitic *je* may occur either after the first accented word, splitting the initial noun phrase, as in (2a), or after the first accented constituent, as in (2b) (cf. Browne 1973: 41, Radanović-Kocić 1988: 99, Franks and King 2000: 28-29; also Spencer 1991: 355).²

(2) a. ‘Second’ after the first word

Moj *je* brat došao.

my AUX brother come

‘My brother has come.’

b. ‘Second’ after the first constituent

Moj brat *je* došao.

(Examples from Radanović-Kocić 1988: 91, (50))

Other languages allow only one of the two positions. For example, the second position in Pashto is after the first accented constituent with the exception of verb-initial sentences (cf. Tegey 1977: 81, 84). Warlpiri also chooses the position after the first constituent (cf. Hale 1973, Zwicky 1977: 19). On the other hand, in languages such as Vedic (cf. Hock 1985: 70), Greek (cf. Schwyzler 1953: 388, 1966: 692), and Tagalog (cf. Schachter and Otnes 1972: 183-4, 411), the second position is after the first word.

A number of scholars have observed that light finite verbs in early Germanic, especially auxiliaries in main clauses, are often unaccented in clause-early or in second position. Among the earliest proponents were Wackernagel (1892: 427) and Kuhn (1933: 66-68), who claimed that finite verbs in early Germanic were clitics in main clauses and thus caused verb-second in main clauses in contrast to verb-final order in subordinate clauses (cf. also Ries 1880: 53-54, 68-69, 104 and Fourquet 1938: 199-201 for the distribution of light verbs that is different from

other verbs).³ More recently, linguists such as Hopper (1975: 56-58), Hock (1982, 1985, 1991a, 1991b), and Harkness (1991: 97-104) have discussed this issue of finite verb cliticization in early Germanic. Following Wackernagel, Hock (1982, 1985, 1991a: 330-333, 1991b) claimed that cliticization of auxiliaries initiated word order change from verb-final to verb-second. Based on the examination of early Germanic texts such as *Beowulf* and *Heliand*, Hock (1985: 75, 79) further assumed that the finite verb was originally after the clause-initial sequence of ‘light elements’ (i.e. conjunctions, pronouns, and short adverbs) and shifted towards the position after the first constituent. Moreover, following Kuhn, metrists working on *Beowulf* and other Old English verse, especially Bliss (1981: 161) and Donoghue (1986: 171-172, 1987: 10), pointed out that ‘light auxiliaries’ in Donoghue’s term (i.e. metrically monosyllabic ones) tend to occur in the first halfline of the clause as opposed to ‘heavy auxiliaries’ (i.e. disyllabic ones) which may also occur later in the clause. Further, Getty (1997: 174, 1998: 72-77, 2000: 51-52, 55, 2002: 63-67, 321-324) showed that in *Beowulf* auxiliaries occur more often in clause-early position than lexical verbs and that verb-second is predominantly by monosyllabic verb forms rather than by polysyllabic forms. Although there are differences in details, the references cited above all agree in that finite verbs in early Germanic, especially auxiliaries, showed distributional peculiarities which are characteristic of clitics. However, they are not unanimous or often do not explicitly state as to how to characterize the position of clitic verbs.

In the next section, I will show that the position of clitic verbs in the *Heliand* is typically after the first one-word constituent and that they cannot be inserted into the clause-initial constituent that consists of more than one word, as given in the Serbo-Croatian example in (2a) above.

3. Clitic verbs in the Old Saxon *Heliand*

In the *Heliand* many finite verbs occur unaccented in ‘second position’, most frequently after the clause-initial demonstrative pronoun or adverb, as in (3a), but also after the clause-initial accented word, as in (3b) (cf. Kuhn 1933: 98-99).⁴

(3) a. After the first unaccented word

That *scoldun* sea *fiori* thuo *fingron* scriþan
that should they four then fingers write
settian endi *singan* endi *seggean* forð, Hel 32-33
set and sing and say forth
'those four then should write that with their fingers, set it, sing it, and say it forth.'

Thô *giuuê*t im ôc mid is hiuuisca
then went himself also with his family

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Joseph the gôdo | Hel 356b-357a |
| Joseph the good | |
| ‘Then Joseph the good went with his family’ | |

b. After the first accented word

gern *uuas* hê suuĩđo, Hel 92b
eager was he very
'he was very eager,'

Maria *unas* siu hêten, Hel 252b
Mary was she called
'she was called Mary,'

Less frequently, unaccented finite verbs occur after the clause-initial accented constituent that consists of two words, as in (4) (cf. Kuhn 1933: 94).

(4) After the first accented constituent

thîn thionost *is* im an thanke, Hel 118a
 your service is him at thank
 'he is grateful for your service,'

Ualdandes craft
ruler's power

uûd strâta endi brêd, Hel 1773b-1774a
 wide street and broad
 ‘One of them is a wide and broad street,’

There are also sentences where the finite verb in second position as well as an unaccented pronoun/adverb intervene between the head noun and the modifier. For example, in (7a) *bium ic* appears to be inserted in the phrase *thiu theotgodes* and in (7b) *uuârun thô* is between *Kristes* and *uuord* which form the subject phrase.

(7) Genitive noun and the head in either order

- a. *Thiu bium ic theotgodes.* Hel 285a
 maid-servant am I of-mankind’s-God
 ‘I am the maid servant of mankind’s God.’
- b. *Kristes uuârun thô*
 Christ’s were then
uuord gefullot: Hel 2161b-2162a
 words fulfilled
 ‘Christ’s words were then fulfilled.’

The examples given in (5), (6), and (7) suggest that clitic verbs in Old Saxon may also occur after the first word.

However, these examples of apparent discontinuous noun phrases, i.e. (5), (6), and (7), cannot necessarily be attributed to cliticization of the finite verb and other light elements. First of all, as in other early Germanic languages, word order in Old Saxon was fairly flexible and allowed discontinuous elements, as Kuhn himself discusses (1933: 74-83). For example, as indicated in italics in (8) below, several words may intervene between an adjective and the noun it modifies in (8a) and also between the head noun and the modifying genitive noun phrase in (8b).

- (8) a. Thar uarð im *mahtig* cuman
 there was him mighty come
 an thero uûstunni *uuord* fon himila, Hel 863b-864
 in the wasteland word from heaven

‘There in the wasteland the mighty word came to him from heaven, ...’

sum quam thar an middian dag, *man* te them uuerke, Hel 3419
 some came there in mid day man to the work
 ‘some man came there to work at noon,’

- b. Sô uuas than *thero liudeo* *thau*
 so was then the of-people custom
 thurh then aldon êu, *Ebreo* *folkes*, Hel 306b-307
 by the old law of-Hebrews of-people
 ‘So was then the custom of the people, of the Hebrews, by the old law,’

The separation in these examples cannot be attributed to cliticization. It is partly because of the requirements on verse composition such as alliteration and the number of syllables in a halfline and partly because of frequent rightward movement of heavy elements. This fact suggests that the non-adjacent modifier and head in (7) above may be similar examples.

The same flexibility in word order applies to the sentences that involve pronouns, i.e. examples in (5) and (6) above. In Old Saxon pronouns as well as short adverbs tend to cluster in clause-early position (cf. Hopper 1975: 32-33, 37, 47, 72, Hock 1985; also Ries 1880: 33-37, 53-54, 68-70). Because of this phenomenon, there are examples where a genitive pronoun is separated from the head noun including quantifiers such as *ênig*. For example, in the two sentences given in (9) the pronoun *iro* occurs clause-early while the modified *ênig* is later in the clause.

- (9) ni uuas *iro* sô sikur *ênig*, Hel 3875b
 not was of-them so sure any
 ‘none of them was so sure,’

antat *iro* thar *ênig* ni uuas
 until of-them there any not was
 thes fundo folkes, Hel 3880b-3881a
 the of-enemies of-people
 ‘until there was none of them, of the people of enemies,’

When the finite verb is in clause-initial or second position, non-nominative personal pronouns usually follows it directly, as given in (10) (cf. Hock 1985: 75-77).

- (10) it is *unc* al te lat
 it is us all too late
 sô te giuinnanne, Hel 142b-143a
 so to achieve
 ‘it is all too late for us to achieve [it] so,’
 Uuas *iru* uilleo mikil, Hel 447b
 was her desire great
 ‘Her desire was strong,’
 endi uuil *iro* an is hugi athenkean, Hel 1804b
 and wants them in his mind recall
 ‘...and wants to think about them in his mind,...’

Thus the order of the genitive pronoun directly following the finite verb in second position as *ên uuas iro...* in (5a) and *sum habad iro...* in (5b) above represents a productive pattern.

Furthermore, Hopper (1975: 64) states that in Old Saxon the genitive pronoun usually precedes the head. Also, my examination of the *Heliand* reveals that relevant examples, although small in number, suggest that the unmarked order between a genitive pronoun and a modified quantifier occurring in a sequence is that the pronoun precedes the quantifier. This fact implies that the opposite order as given in (5) above, i.e. *ên ... iro* and *sum ... iro*, must be a marked order such as by contrastive focus, as will be shown below. While the *Heliand* does not have any example other than (5a) above where *ên* is modified by a genitive pronoun, the *Genesis* has two examples of *iro ên* as in (11), but no *ên iro* in the opposite order, comparable to (5a).⁶

- (11) botan that *iro* *ên* habda *er*las gihugdi, Gen 129
 except that of-them one had of-man thought
 ‘except that one of them had thought of the man,’

Cf. also *iro ênna* in Gen 327

Moreover, the *Heliand* has two instances of *iro ênig*, again in the order: genitive pronoun followed by a quantifier, as in (12).

- (12) that *iro* *ênig* ni habde sô grimmon sebon Hel 2687b
 that of-them any not had so grim mind
 ‘so that none of them had such a grim mind’

The examples given in (11) and (12) suggest that the order of the head noun and the genitive pronoun given in (5) above is not the unmarked one. Therefore it is not the case that the subject phrase in an unmarked order has been split by finite verb cliticization. It is more reasonable to assume that one or both words of the subject phrase deviate from the canonical position.

The discussions so far have shown that the genitive pronoun does not have to be adjacent to the head noun due to ‘free’ word order in Old Saxon, precedes the head noun in case the pronoun and the head noun are adjacent, and directly follows the verb in clause-early position, as given in two examples in (5). As a final piece of evidence for the proposed alternative account for the order given in (5), I discuss now why the head noun precedes the second-position verb. The context suggests that *ên* in (5a) and possibly also *sum* in (5b) are placed in the clause-initial position as a focus in contrast with what follows. In (13) the sentence (5a) is reproduced in italics with the preceding and following context. The genitive pronoun *iro* in the italicized sentence refers to *uueroldaldar* ‘ages of the world’ in the previous line. One of the ages referred to by the clause-initial *ên* in line 46b is contrasted with the other five in the following clause in 47b.

- (13)
- | | | | |
|--|------------|---------------------|--|
| | that uuarð | thuo all mid | <u>uu</u> ordon godas |
| | that was | then all by | words God’s |
| <u>f</u> asto <u>b</u> ifangan, | ... | | |
| firmly encompass | | | |
| ... | eftho huar | thiu | <u>uu</u> eroldaldar |
| | or | when those | ages-of-the-world |
| <u>e</u> ndon scoldin. | <i>Ên</i> | <i>uwas iro</i> | <i>thuo noh than</i> |
| end should | one | was of-them | then still then |
| <u>f</u> iriho <u>b</u> arnun <u>b</u> iforan | endi thiu | <u>f</u> ibi uuârun | agangan: Hel 42b-43a, 45b-47 ⁷ |
| of-men sons before | and the | five were | gone-by |
| ‘it was all firmly encompassed by the words of God...or when those ages of the world | | | |

should come to an end. One of them was still before the sons of men and the five were past:’

Based on the assumption that *iro ên* rather than *ên iro* is the unmarked order, as has been just shown, *ên* cannot be clause-initial in an unmarked order but is placed in clause-initial position by contrastive focus in (13) (= (5a)).

Note also that both *ên* and *fīðī* in (13) alliterate in the second halfline and thus are in the third lift, which represents the strongest accent in the long line (cf. fn. 4). Accentuation on these words provides further evidence that they are focused elements (cf. Oshima 2001: 1, 3; also Oshima 2002).

Similarly but less explicitly, in (14), some men that are referred to in the italicized sentence (= (5b)) are wicked, in contrast with the one who is willing to follow the lord in the following context, again suggesting that *sum* in the italicized sentence is under focus.

- (14)
- | | | | | | |
|----------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| | sie | sind | sô | <u>mislīka</u> , | |
| | they | are | so | different | |
| <u>heliðos</u> | gehugda: | <i>sum</i> | <i>haðad</i> | <i>iro</i> | <i><u>hardan</u></i> |
| men | thinking | some | have | of-them | hard argument |
| <u>uureðan</u> | <u>uullean</u> , | <u>uuancolna</u> | hugi, | | |
| angry | will | | wavering | mind | |
| is imu | fêknes | ful | endi | firinuerko. | |
| is them | of-malice | full | and | of-sins | |
| Than | biginnid | imu | <u>thunkean</u> , | than | he undar theru <u>thiodu</u> stâd |
| then | begins | him | seem | when | he among the people stood |
| ... | | | | than | thunkid imu, that he sie gerno forð |
| | | | | then | seems him that he it willingly forth |
| lêstien | uullie; | | | | Hel 2492b-6, 2498b-9a |
| carry-out | would-want | | | | |
- ‘men are so different in thinking: some of them have a harsh argument, angry intention, wavering mind, they are full of malice and sins. Then he begins to think, as he was standing among the people, ... then he thinks that he would carry it (= God’s teaching) out willingly;’

While *ên* in (13) is in the strongest accented position as discussed above, *sum* in (14) is metrically unaccented, preceding the third lift in the b-verse. However, lack of accent on *sum* does not necessarily undermine the claim that this word is in contrastive focus. First, while the contrast of the ‘one’ and the ‘five’ is explicitly stated in (13), in (14) the contrast between the ‘bad ones’ and the ‘good one’ is less explicit and is understood from the context. Moreover, accentuation in a given verse is determined partly by what other words there are in the same half-line. In *ên uuas iro thuo noh than* in (13), the words other than the alliterating *ên* in the same half-line are all grammatical words that are usually unaccented or weakly accented. On the other hand, in *sum habad iro hardan strid* in (14) there are two lexical words that are more accentable than *sum*, i.e. *hardan* and *strid*, and these words fill the two lifts. Therefore, lack of metrical accent on *sum* may be due to less explicit statement of the contrast and to the presence of more accentable words in the same halfline.

Moreover, although words in a metrically unaccented position may not be strongly accented in actual utterance, some of them may bear a certain amount of accent even though the metrical structure does not provide evidence for this weaker accentuation. For example, in (15a) the verb *gifrag*n is likely to bear the strongest accent among the five words in the verse-initial unaccented position in italics although this accent is certainly weaker than the accent on words in the two lifts.

- (15) a. *Sô gifrag*n *ik, that that uuif* antfeng Hel 288b
 so found-out I that that woman received
 ‘So I found out that that woman received...’

- b. *siðor ic sie mi te brūdi* gecôs. Hel 147b
 since I her me to bride chose
 ‘since I chose her as my bride.’

In (15b), of the five words in the verse-initial dip in italics, it is not clear if all are equally unaccented, or one or more are weakly accented in actual utterance. Also in (14)(= (5b)), it is possible that *sum* bear a certain amount of weak accent.

For the reasons stated so far, the separation of the genitive pronoun and the head as given in (5) is attributed to flexibility in word order, focus movement of the head of the subject phrase, and the ordering principle of pronouns and adverbs in addition to finite verb cliticization.

Lastly, as to the example given in (6) *thero is ôðar...* with a clause-initial demonstrative pronoun, in the *Heliand* demonstratives, both adverbs such as *thô* ‘then’ and *thar* ‘there’ and pronouns such as *that* ‘that’, are often placed clause-initially as a clause-linker, as shown in the two examples in (3a) and the first example in (8a) above (cf. Ries 1880: 42-43, 45). Similarly, in (6) the demonstrative pronoun alone is placed in clause-initial position most plausibly because it functions as a clause-linker.

As a summary of the discussions so far, the split of the clause-initial noun phrase as given in (5), (6), and (7) results from the interaction of several independently motivated ordering principles rather than only from finite verb cliticization. Clitic verbs typically occur after the first word that forms a constituent on its own, most frequently after a short adverb such as *thô* or *than* but also after a pronoun or an accented word (cf. (3) above). Less frequently, they occur after the clause-initial constituent that consists of more than one word (cf. (4)), but do not create a discontinuous element. Thus the ‘second position’ of clitic verbs in the *Heliand* is after the first one-word constituent in the majority of examples, which is more restrictive than the position after the first word or the first constituent.

According to Kuhn (1933: 93-94), the second position in Germanic was originally after the first word and was later reanalyzed as the position after the first constituent, which in turn would be grammaticalized as the position for the finite verb. He further claims that the *Heliand* represents a transitional stage of this reanalysis because the ‘old’ and the ‘new’ second positions coexist, i.e. after the first word and after the first constituent, respectively. As has been shown, my examination of the Old Saxon texts shows that the original second position requires a further qualification that the first word form a constituent on its own. While cross-linguistically the second position is EITHER after the first word OR after the first constituent as discussed in section 2 above, the second position in Old Saxon is after the first word AND constituent. This restrictive second position may be a compromise of the two interacting but often conflicting demands, i.e. first, preference for the second position after the first word and, second, tendency to avoid discontinuous elements due to cliticization.

Section 2 has also shown that Serbo-Croatian allows two possible second positions. However, according to Radanović-Kocić (1988: 135, chapter 3), tendency to avoid discontinuous elements is observed in the historical shift of second position. That is, second position was originally ‘after the first accented word’ at pre-Serbo-Croatian stage, i.e. in Old Church Slavic, but, as the language acquired more sentential clitics, second position was extended to ‘after the first accented constituent’. She further argues that in Modern Serbo-Croatian, second position

is primarily ‘after the first constituent’ and that the position ‘after the first word’ has restrictions (cf. fn. 2) and is on further decline. In a similar fashion, in Germanic the second position started as the position ‘after the first single-word constituent’ and was generalized to ‘after the first constituent’.

4. Conclusions

I have shown that the Old Saxon *Heliand* lacks any unambiguous example where the clause-initial phrase is disrupted by a clitic verb. The canonical ‘second position’ for clitic verbs in the *Heliand* is after the first one-word constituent. This position of clitic verbs was later extended to the position after the first constituent that consists of one word or more. The language of the *Heliand* shows a transitional stage of this shift.

The findings of the present paper not only illuminate how the ‘second position’ started in Germanic but also what restrictions there are on the ‘second position’ of clitics in general.

Notes

- * I thank Hans Henrich Hock for discussions and suggestions. I also thank two anonymous reviewers for suggestions for improvement.
- 1 Cliticization of finite verbs to second position must be distinguished from verb-second or V2 although these two notions overlap. Cliticization is a prosodic phenomenon and depends on factors such as accent and prosodic weight of word forms. On the other hand, verb-second or V2 is defined in terms of syntax and refers to the finite verb after the first constituent of the clause rather than after the first word. In contrast to cliticization, it is insensitive to the types of verbs, i.e. auxiliaries vs. lexical verbs, or phonological make-up of verb forms such as number of syllables or accentuation. Cf. Anderson (1993: 72-73) and Kiparsky (1995: 160).
- 2 The two options of Serbo-Croatian second position illustrated here are by no means in free variation. According to Radanović-Kocić (1988: 111-118), the choice between the two depends on whether the first constituent is the subject or not and whether the focus lies on the first word only or the entire first constituent. For restrictions on the second position after the first word, see also Franks and King (2000: 219-222, 357-361) and Bošković (2001: 11ff.).
- 3 Needless to say, there are criticisms of and alternatives to the hypothesis that finite verb cliticization has led to word order change in Germanic (cf. e.g. Stockwell 1977, Faarlund 1990, and Kiparsky 1995 among others). For a brief survey, see Harris and Campbell (1995: 215-220).

- 4 The examples from the Old Saxon *Heliand* (abbr. *Hel*) and the *Genesis* (abbr. *Gen*) are cited from Behaghel and Taeger (1984). The number refers to the line number, and ‘a’ and ‘b’ after the line number refers to the a-verse or the first halfline and the b-verse or the second halfline, respectively. In alliterative verse each halfline typically consists of two accented positions or lifts and two unaccented positions or dips. Lifts are in part indicated by alliteration and, since alliterating lifts stand out more than non-alliterating lifts, alliteration is said to represent strong phrase-level accent. Among four lifts in a long line, the third must alliterate and thus is considered the strongest in accentuation. On the other hand, the fourth lift may not alliterate and thus is considered the weakest in accentuation. In the examples given, alliteration is indicated by an underline. For a quick overview of the structure of Germanic alliterative verse, see Godden (1992), section 8.2. For an index of alliterating words in the *Heliand*, see Lehmann (1953), and for detailed metrical analyses of the *Heliand*, see Hofmann (1991) and Suzuki (2004).
- 5 The number excludes verbs in a clause of two or three words in an unaccented position where the verb is likely to be stronger accented than the other words, as given in (i).

(i) a. He *quað* ... Hel 133a (part of a halfline)

he said

‘he said...’

b. Sô *gîfragn* ik, ... Hel 288b (part of a halfline)

so heard I

‘So I heard, ...’

In Old Saxon negative particle *nî* is comparable to verbal prefixes in that it directly precedes the finite verb and has no freedom in order (cf. Hopper 1975: 39). Therefore, it is considered part of the verb form and is not counted as a separate word. Thus, the verb is clause-initial in (iia) and is in second position in (iib).

(ii) a. *nî uuas* gio thiû fêmea sô gôd, Hel 310b

not was ever the woman so good

‘the woman was never so good,’

b. He *nî mohta* thô ênig uord spreca, Hel 184b

he not could then any word speak

‘He could not speak any word,’

- 6 For exhaustive search of particular word forms and expressions, I used Sehrt (1925), a dictionary of the *Heliand* and *Genesis* with a concordance.
- 7 While there are two words that begin with a vowel in 47b, *én* rather than *iro* fills the third lift because pronouns in clause-early position are consistently in an unaccented position. Scansion of earlier scholars agree in this point. Lehmann (1953: 62) lists *én* as the alliterating word in 47b. Both Hofmann (1991 II: 242) and Suzuki (2004: 371) scan 47b as type A verse, i.e. the type of verse that consists of two trochees, and thus *én* must be the alliterating word.

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